PROPHETIC CONTROVERSY, No. 2;

EXTRACTED FROM THE WRITINGS AND CRITICISMS OF

JOHN E. PAGE, JAMES J. STRANG, WILLIAM MARKS AND HYRUM P. BROWN,

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

A FEW NOTES IN BRACKETS, AND A SHORT COMMENTARY BY THE TRANSCRIBER,

WINGFIELD WATSON.

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Mr John E Page, who in the days of Joseph Smith the seer, was one of the Twelve Apostles under him, and afterward became the President of the Twelve under James J. Strang, speaks in the defence of Mr Strang's claims as the successor of Joseph Smith as follows:

"It is as bright a laurel as hangs on the temples of Joseph's character as a prophet that the word of the Lord through him has been fulfilled in this case, That the Lord did, nine days before Joseph was 'taken,' reveal to him James J Strang as the man to take Joseph's place on the earth in his (Joseph's) 'stead.'

"The fact, all circumstances considered in which Joseph was 'taken,' ought to convince every Mobocrat in Missouri and Illinois, that Joseph Smith was a prophet, and that James J Strang is his successor. Emma Smith, the prophet's widow, has told me and many others, that the remarks that stand at the head of the Letter of Appointment to J J Strang transpired in her hearing, while Joseph held the letter in his hand which he had received from Mr Strang, dated the 24th of May, 1844. The postoffice stamp on Mr Strang's letter from Joseph Smith is the same that is on a letter to me that I received from Brigham Young [of Nauvoo] when I was in Boston in the winter of 1843. Who then can say under these circumstances that the Letter of Appointment to Mr. Strang is a forgery? If it is a forgery who forged it? Suppose for sake of the argument that it is a forgery; who is the man that Joseph *did* appoint? It was not Brigham Young as we will see judging him out of his own mouth If it cannot be found that Joseph appointed a man to stand in his stead in the prophetic office, Amen to Mormonism, with all its high sounding pretensions. It is virtually buried in everlasting oblivion, execrated to the lowest hell, the abode of all false prophets and liars, Brigham Young not excepted; for if he was appointed he lied like a coward, and published it in the Times and Seasons of Aug. 15, 1844, page 618, saying to the saints throughout the world, '*you are now without a prophet present with you in the flesh to guide you*' If he had continued

and said, 'consequently Joseph was a vile impostor, and I am done with Mormonism,' he would have shown forth a little logical consistency, instead of a usurping hypocrite. Hear him again—

"'On the 8th of August, 1844, at a special meeting of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, convened at the stand in the city of Nauvoo, President Brigham Young called the the meeting to order, and arranged the several quorums according to their standing and the rules of the church The meeting had been previously called, as stated to choose a guardian, or trustee for said church And Brigham said, "Do you want *a guardian, a prophet, a spokesman*, or what do you want? If you want any of these officers, signify it by raising the right hand." Not a hand was raised.' Times and Seasons, Vol 5, page 637

"Here then the Church virtually voted that there should be no more a Prophet, a Revelator, a Translator or Seer in the church, and Christ not yet come, which was as much as to say that Joseph Smith was one of the most damnable impostors that ever cursed mankind with imposition, for we have found above that Joseph has said that the Lord said, 'the keys of mysteries' and receiving commandments and revelations, was to abide with him, or one planted in his stead till the coming of Christ.

"And now hear Amasa Lyman on that same occasion

"'Elder Amasa Lyman followed and fully accorded with the instructions and views of Elder Young I have been at the back of the Prophet Joseph, and shall be at the back of the Twelve There is *no need*, says Amasa, of choosing a guardian or *head* The Apostles have the power as they had anciently"

"But hear this same Amasa Lyman now at the Brighamite Conference held at Council Bluffs, Dec 24, 1847

"'Amasa Lyman spoke on the subject, and said the idea of having the First President was nothing new, that it had been all arranged long since by the Council (that is the Council of the Twelve) and there was no danger of going wrong, that all bodies *must have a head*, and all intelligence must come from the head. And the time had come when the ends of the church could not be saved without a head, and the very man who was to be the head had been at the head all the time He asked who the head was amenable to, and answered, to his head, for no bodies however great were so high that they had no head, and that the time had come when the Twelve must lead out the master spirits of the Kingdom, must go to the east and west, north and south, and plant the seeds of eternal life

"'It was moved and seconded that Brigham Young should be our First President. It was carried unanimously It was next moved and carried unanimously, that Heber C Kimbal be first counsellor to Brigham Young It was next moved and seconded that Dr W Richards be appointed second counsellor Carried unanimously'

"Ah! Amasa, a body live almost four years without a head, of which God said it should not be without a

head until the coming of Christ, the great head of the church? O consistency, where hast thou fled? If the Twelve Apostles have power to lead the church four years 'without a head,' *why not always?*

"Why, Amasa, you contradict your venerable President, and throw the lie right smack in his face. For Brigham Young in his apostolic epistle of Aug 15, 1844, says, 'LET NO MAN PRESUME FOR A MOMENT THAT HIS (JOSEPH'S) PLACE WILL BE FILLED BY ANOTHER FOR REMEMBER HE STANDS IN HIS OWN PLACE AND ALWAYS WILL. AND THE TWELVE APOSTLES STAND IN THEIR OWN PLACE AND ALWAYS WILL' Times and Seasons, Vol 5, page 618.

"Now Amasa is wolf hungry for a prophet, and neither he nor the church can live without one And how, pray, shall we make one? Why we shall call on the same people who once at the back of Brigham Young virtually voted that they would not have a prophet to vote for this same Brigham Young and make him a prophet. Infidels don't laugh, I beg of you, while fools, hypocrites and usurpers play peep and boob with each other Let me tell you there is a divine reality in religion, and that, too, in genuine Mormonism Rather lend us your sympathy to help us pity poor frail mortal man when left to himself, and he steals the livery of heaven to serve the devil in

"Let us now turn to Orson Pratt Orson says—'At this period of the church they had to *select a First Presidency*, and they would admit that the argument of the apostates (the Strangites) that the organization of the church was not complete (without the First Presidency) was correct'

"Who would have thought that such language could have ever fallen from the lips of Orson Pratt, once the Principal of the Nauvoo University, and who W W. Phelps calls the guage of Philosophy? Orson, where and when did you learn that God ever called upon a people who had no head or prophet to make a prophet for him? If you will allow me to answer, I think it originated at Council Bluffs, among a set of aspiring usupers, who had been driven from the city of Joseph under the '*curs ings wrath, indignation*, and judgments' of God, 'upon *your own heads, by your follies and all your abominations which you* practiced before the Lord' For the Lord told the saints at Nauvoo through Joseph in 1841, that if they would do his will, 'THEY SHOULD NOT BE MOVED OUT OF THEIR PLACE' (Nauvoo) Let us have the whole sentence of the law upon this point, and then judge whether you left Nauvoo under a *blessing* or under a *fiery curse*.

"If ye labor with all your mights, I will consecrate that spot (the temple ground, Nauvoo) that it shall be made holy, and if my people will hearken unto my voice, and unto the voice of my servants whom I have appointed to lead my people, behold verily I say unto you they shall not be moved out of their place, but if they will not hearken unto my voice, nor unto the voice of those men whom I have appointed, they shall not be blest,—be-

cause they polute mine holy grounds, and my holy ordinances and charters, and my holy words which I give unto them. And it shall come to pass that if you build a house unto my name, and do not do the things that I say, I will not perform the oath which I make unto you, neither fulfill the promises which ye expect at my hands, saith the Lord; for instead of blessing, ye, by your own work bring curses, wrath, indignation, and judgments upon your own heads, by your follies, and by all your abominations which you practice before me, saith the Lord.' Doc. and Cov. Sec. 103, P. 13, 14.

"For proof that the Twelve were apprised of the fact that Joseph Smith had appointed James J Strang as his (Joseph's) successor, I copy an entire article from the Times and Seasons, Vol 5, page 631.

"'Whereas Elders James J Strang and Aaron Smith, have been circulating a revelation (falsely called) purporting to have been received by Joseph Smith on the 18th of June, 1844, and through the influence of which they have attempted and are attempting to establish a stake, called Voree, in Wisconsin Territory, thereby leading the saints astray; therefore the said James J Strang and Aaron Smith are cut off from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, this 26th day of August, 1844 By order of the Council of the Twelve WILLARD RICHARDS, CLERK'

"When did any one notify Strang to appear to answer any charges? NEVER Before what tribunal of the church was he tried? NONE Who ever heard before of the idea of the Quorum of the Twelve, sitting in judgment on the First President of the church? NOBODY The notice proves that Strang had given you due notice of his appointment and that, too, at the earliest date possible. It also proves to a demonstration you rejected God, and all the laws that he had given to the church providing for the appointment of Joseph's successor, in case of his martyrdom, which was that 'none other should be appointed except through him,' (Joseph) and thus has God lavished his fourfold curses on you, and left you to do as you are doing.

"In the Times and Seasons, Vol 5, page 718, W W. Phelps says, 'Have the Quorum of the Twelve the same power and authority of the full Quorum of the First Presidency? *Yes, they have.* Well, then, do they not become the First Presidency, inasmuch as the *First Presidency has ceased to be*? Nothing can be more clear, and certain than that they do'

"Mr Phelps, where and when did you learn that the Twelve have the same 'power' and 'authority,' of the full quorum of the First Presidents? Not in all the Books of God. A greater perversion I should not expect from the simplest child that can read the alphabet The Twelve are a Presidency in the church in all the world abroad, and not at the seat of the First Presidents at home, acting under the direction of the First Presidency of the church. The Twelve are also amenable to the council of the church over which the First Presidents of the church preside 'There

is not any person belonging to the church who is exempt from this council of the church.' Doc. and Cov., Sec III, par 36.

"Mr Phelps, I advise you to never again pour forth any of your sarcasm on sectarians for their perversions of the Bible. It is time for you to hush! It appears that your work did not stay done, for

"'Elder W. W. Phelps moved that we uphold Brigham Young, the President of the quorum of the Twelve, as one of the Twelve and First Presidency of the church This motion was duly seconded, and carried unanimously.' Times and Seasons, Vol. 5, page 692

"The above transpired at the Nauvoo October conference of 1844. Here then, the same people at the same place, voted to make Brigham Young prophet, that virtually voted only the August before that they '*did not want a prophet, a guardian or any such thing,*' but now they try to make him a kind of mongrel officer, that I cannot find words to describe, therefore I shall call him a nondescript, a kind of a stay-at-home, and at the same time travel in all the world,—stay at home as the 'First Presidency of the church' and travel in all the world, as the President of the traveling high council! But as Brigham's transmogrification has not resulted in the purpose for which it was designed, these same people, who at one time did not want a prophet, have transformed him into an entire stay-at-home toady, to be a man made prophet, to fill the shoes of a God-made one Poh! Does God thus behe himself in making a prophet at one time, and in about three years after, as a farmer would an old ox-sled, make him over again? Nonsense in the extreme. Saints of common sense, is the one above described the one? Is such a prophet one that God endows with the keys of mysteries and revelations to lead a people into all truth, and sanctify them for the bride of Christ, and exalt them to the glory of the church of the first born? If so, let common sense blush and hide her face

"One may ask, how is the First President of the church constituted or made That Moses, Joshua, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, Peter and Joseph Smith were made prophets by the call and ordination of God, no consistent Latter Day Saint will dispute, and the case was never heard of before the rise of the Brighamite faction, that a prophet, bearing the keys of mysteries and revelations was ever created or constituted by the elective franchise of the church of God." [They can elect or choose them to lead them after God calls and ordains them by angels, but no people, great or small, ever yet made a prophet of God by their vote or franchise]

"The Popes of the Roman church, and the Bishops and Presidents of the several Protestant churches are constituted such by the elective voice of their several bodies, but not so in the true church of God. God always makes his own prophets, and takes them away when and for what purpose he pleases, independent of the voice of the people The authorities of the church can only require a pro-

phet to make repairs to others if he has done wrong in any case where the sense of such authority requires it, but there is no authority in the heavens above, nor on the earth beneath nor under the earth, that can either grant or take away his priesthood, or touch the keys of his ministry short of God himself, who called, [ordained] qualified and granted such keys, perfectly independent, and aside from the voice of any other

"Orson Pratt appeals to the circumstances of the church not being perfectly organized under Joseph in its first rise, and afterward grew into a perfect organization. Yes, Orson, I admit all that true So it was in the former day church God first makes the head, and then sets the head to work to constitute the other members of the body, but never yet did the Lord make the other members of the body, and then set them to work to make the head, neither is it the law God has established in the things of all nature; but no doubt Brigham will make his ignorant dupes believe they cannot unmake him, now that that they have made him other than to make him over again in the course of two, three, or four months more.

"It is said that Amasa Lyman read a revelation which President Young handed him, given in the spring of 1847'

"Well, I suppose the audience of 60 by 40 feet, swallowed it down as good, sacred and divine, and that too right in the face and eyes of the plain word of God, to the contrary, which says —'*Ye shall not receive the teachings of any that shall come before you as commandments and revelations except it be through Joseph or him who he shall appoint*, [by revelation from God] *and this I* (God) *give unto you that ye may not be deceived and that ye may know they are not of me*' Doc & Cov, Sec IV. p 2

"In the Times and Seasons, Vol 5, page 638, Brigham Young says— 'We have no new revelations but beseech the brethren to honor and obey the *old ones*'

"In one month and four days after (page 683) Brigham says —'Every member has the right to receive revelations *for themselves*, both male and female'

"According to the above idea every member of the church, 'both male and female,' was forever exonerated from receiving revelations from any other From the same page in the same speech, he says.—'You are not going to be led without revelation The prophet has stepped behind the veil, and you have the right to obtain *revelations for your own salvation*'

"On the next page John Taylor (one of the Twelve) says —'We are in possession of the same principles, the *same priesthood* (of Joseph) the same medium of communication and intelligence, and of those things which not only secures us happiness here but hereafter When we speak of these matters, we speak of things which we *know assuredly*'

"Now, John, you did not '*know*' any such thing You either told a willfull falsehood or you were as ignorant of one of the first rudiments

of the Latter Day Saints, faith as a Gentile sectarian Joseph Smith as a prophet, revelator, translator and seer held a sole priesthood like unto Moses, which constituted him a legislator or lawgiver to the church of God, which neither Brigham Young, nor yourself, nor any other man on earth held but Joseph Smith in his day, which could not be conferred on any other man in any other way than the way God had ordained, as I have quoted above, i e, he appointed of God through Joseph, and ordained by angels. Had the idea been stated by you, or any other man in the church in Joseph's hearing, as you have stated, he would have been turned over to the buffetings of Satan in a hurry if he did not repent

"I should like to be favored with a copy of Brigham's 'new revelation,' although he has as much as said no person is held responsible by it, because he says,—'Every male and female has a right to obtain revelation for themselves.'

> 'O what a tangled web we weave
> When first we practice to deceive"

"George A. Smith asks the question 'How was Joseph made a prophet? Ans. Peter, James and John ordained him.' Yes, George, that is right. But I ask how did God say Joseph's successor should be ordained? Ans He is to be appointed by revelation of God through Joseph, and ordained by angels as the Lord told you (Joseph) before, that is, he ordained by angels as Joseph was before Doc. & Cov, Sec XIV, p 2.

"'But', says one, 'Does not the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, Sec. 3, P 11, say that "three High Priests chosen by the body, appointed and ordained to that office, and upheld by the faith and prayers of the church form *the* Quorum of *the* First Presidency of the church?" ' No It says no such thing It says 'they form *a* Quorum of the Presidency of the church.' The term *First* is not there, as it happens. There is quite a difference, too, between a definite and an indefinite article. *The* is definite, *a* is indefinite. Go back to the words of the question, and strike out the word '*the*' before Quorum, and put *a* in its stead, and then strike out the word '*First*' entirely, and then it will read precisely as it is written in the Book of Covenants. There are quite a number of quorums in the church, to wit, The prophet and his two counsellors are *the* Quorum of the *First* Presidency of the church

"The three High Priests referred to, are *a* Quorum of the Presidency of the church

"The Twelve are *a* Quorum of the Presidency of the church

"A President of a Stake and his two counsellors are *a* Quorum of the Presidency of the church

"The seven Presidents of the Seventies, are *a* Quorum of the Presidency of the church

"An Elder and his two counsellors, form *a* Quorum of the Presidency of the church

"A Bishop and his two counsellors, are *a* Quorum of the Presidency of the church

"A Priest (Aaronic) and his two counsellors, are *a* Quorum of the Presidency of the church.

"A teacher and his two counsellors, are *a* Quorum of the Presidency of the church.

"A Deacon and his two counsellors, are *a* Quorum of the Presidency of the church.

"These all constitute the Presidency of the church, and all of these are chosen and set apart by the voice of the church, except THE FIRST PRESIDENCY, which are called and set apart by direct revelation, and in no other way.

"The President of the church who is also the President of the council is appointed by revelation, and is acknowledged in his administration by the voice of the church; and it is according to the dignity of his office that he should preside over the high council [or supreme court] of the church, and it is his privilege to be assisted by two other Presidents [or Vice-Presidents] appointed after the same manner that he himself was appointed, and in case of the absence of one, or both of those who are appointed to assist him, he has power to preside over the council without an assistant, and in case that he himself is absent the other Presidents have power to preside in his stead, both, or either of them Doc. and Cov Sec. V· p 6.

"To this council every other Quorum of the Presidency of the church is accountable The three High Priests above referred to, are *a* Quorum of the Presidency of the church Their Priesthood and Presidency grow out of, or are appointed of, or from among those who have already received the Priesthood given of God, to the First President, or Presidency of the church.

"Therefore as these three High Priests could not grow out of a Priesthood before it was given, and as there could be no church to choose them, it remains as a matter of course that, the three High Priests spoken of, are not, and cannot be the First Presidency of the church, but simply 'a Quorum of the Presidency of the church' of the High Priest's Quorum, *not* presiding over the whole church as the First Presidency of the church, but of the church, presiding over a part of it.

"Thus I close with a consciousness I have discharged a duty which I owed to God, and those who were once my companions in the gospel of Christ. The time has been, when the views I have presented above were the views of those very men whom I have noticed so lengthily, and they *know* as well as I, that the above views were *their views*, and the views of the whole church, at least that part of it that made any considerable progress in the knowledge and discipline of the church. And further, they know that if any man had in Joseph's day taught as they are teaching now, he would have been hurled over its battlements in very short order

"JOHN E PAGE"

See Gospel Herald, Voree, Wis., Aug 17, 1848.

The following are extracts from the correspondence of Mr J. J Strang to Zenos H Gurley, when the latter was a follower and advocate of Brigham Young and his claims. It will not be out of place to state here that Zenos

H. Gurley after this correspondence was re-baptized into the church under Mr. Strang and had been also ordained to the office a President of the Seventies and preached on various missions under Mr Strang's administration, for several years.

"You give me credit" says Mr Strang, "for making *'the most'* of Doc. and Cov in my favor. It seems I have made enough, for no man has reviewed it, though it has diminished the Brighamites by thousands; but whether I have made the most of it or not, I made the same of my cause before I ever read the book My position was taken before I ever read one of all the revelations in the Doc. and Cov and has never been changed. It was formed simply on the facts that really transpired, and I have since merely showed that those facts are such as that Book calls for. * * * *

"I remark that in what you have written, you have altogether passed over the main question, not making the slightest allusion to it. The numerous revelations contained in the Doc. and Cov. showing that the keys of mysteries and revelations belong to the First President, and to nobody else, and that he must be appointed by revelation, and ordained by the ministrations of angels, you have altogether passed by, and merely built up a negative position, on the simple incident—the review of an objection" * * * *

[Mr. Gurley, as other Brighamites and Josephites, quotes the passage in Doc and Cov, sec III: 11.]

"Of necessity there are Presidents or presiding officers, growing out of or appointed of, or from among those who are ordained to the several offices in these two priesthoods. Of the Melchizedec priesthood, (or the High Priest's quorum) three presiding High Priests chosen by the body, appointed and ordained to that office, and upheld by the confidence, faith and prayers of the church, form a quorum of the Presidency of the church"

"In all this," says Mr Strang "there is not one word said about 'First Presidency'" * * * "The three High Priests, are chosen by the body, and ordained to an office growing out of that body or priesthood When so set apart, they form 'a quorum of the presidency of the church.' Not THE Presidency of the church, as you have quoted it Now there are several quorums in the Presidency of the church, and if this is not the Presidency of the High Priests Quorum it still remains to show affirmatively that it is some other particular Quorum of the Presidency—a thing you have not advanced one step in accomplishing Nor have you done what it behooved you as a debater first of all to do given any answer whatever to the overwhelming arguments of Elder [John E.] Page, showing that the three Presidents referred to, are the Presidency of the High Priests Quorum

"You have not made any answer whatever to the fact that the three High Priests referred to are only equal in their power to either the Twelve, any Quorum of the Seventies

or a High Council of a stake Doc and Cov, sec. III: 11, 14. Whereas the First Presidency is superior to either, Doc and Cov., sec. III 12, 42, Sec XVI. 2. Sec. CIV: 6, 7, 11, 12, and consequently cannot be identical. You have not shown by what means these three could be ordained, as the First Presidency. The three are to be chosen by the body, but the book does not tell how they are to be ordained If they are the Presidents of the High Priests' Quorum, it is very obvious how they are to be ordained, to wit by their superiors, the First Presidency But if they are the First Presidency they have no superiors on earth. So who shall ordain them? You say 'ordained by the direction of the church,' but where is the authority for it? Who could the church direct to ordain them? Can they direct the inferior to ordain the superior? The less to bless the greater? If they did assume to give any such direction, would it be valid? The First President of the church holds a single sole priesthood, presiding over all others, and having no fellow or equal on earth Until the fountain can rise above its head, none on earth can ordain to that priesthood. Consequently, God says to Joseph, 'he shall be ordained as I have told you before' Doc and Cov, sec. XIV 2, given Feb, 1831 And the only way it had told him before [how the President over the whole church is ordained] was 'I have sent unto you Peter, James and John, (angels) by whom I have ordained you,' etc Doc and Cov., sec. I 2 3, given Sept., 1830.

"Common sense, and revelation perfectly agree in this rule—Whatever amount and kind of authority it took to make the First President and prophet, the same it takes to make his successors in all time. As the predecessor was called by revelation, so the successors must be, and as the predecessors were consecrated and set apart by the ministration of angels, so the successors must be * * * The church has ever understood that the First President was called by revelation Doc. & Cov, Sec V 6

"Moreover, if you could strike out of the word of the entire law that the prophet, seer, revelator and First President shall be appointed by revelation, and ordained by the ministration of angels, and could substitute in the place of it the law that, 'of the Melchizedec Priesthood three presiding High priests,' should be chosen by the body and ordained by their direction to be the First Presidency, you would still altogether fail of supporting the pretensions of the Brighamites or of showing that any one among them has authority from God as the President of the church, or as chief pastor of the flock of God There is no one among them, or among any other party or division on earth, who has ever been thus chosen or thus ordained There has never been a general assembly of the church held since the death of Joseph, at which such an act could be done at all Nor have the Brigham ite leaders ever claimed authority on

that ground. Their claims until last December were founded on the following facts:

"1st. The vote of the meeting of August 8th, 1844, that '*the church* WOULD NOT *have a* PROPHET,' etc. 2d. The Apostolic letter of Brigham Young of August 15, 1844, declaring that Joseph was not to have a successor at all, but that the Twelve (as a Quorum) held the Keys of power to dictate the affairs of the church in all the world. 3d The votes of three successive conferences, Oct, 1844, April, 1845, and Oct., 1845, declaring that the Quorum of the Twelve were the First Presidency of the church, neither of which acts comes up in any sense to the body choosing three from the Melchizedec Priesthood, and having them ordained by their direction Their act was not the choosing of THREE or any other number It was merely passing a vote to confer a new jurisdiction and additional and incongruous prerogatives on TWELVE or THIRTEEN, who had long before been chosen to another office

"In December last an attempt was made to patch up these matters by what the Brighamites please to call an election of a First Presidency Can you recognize that act as a valid creation of a First Presidency? At another time, than the regular time of holding conferences, at a place that God had not appointed for the gathering of the Saints, on grounds that he had not consecrated to them, there assembles together of this whole the little few that can find room on the space of forty feet by sixty, and declaring themselves headless, acknowledging with unblushing affrontery that the truth is against them, (see their minutes, Herald, vol III, No 20) proceed to vote in Brigham Young, H C Kimball and Willard Richards, First Presidents. Three years ago they boasted 200,000 members in the church. Now they boast of prosperity, and yet get together only 600 men, women and children to choose a First Presidency, to preside over the whole church. If that is what is meant by being chosen by the body, I have the English language yet to learn As for ordination they had none at all Of course not, there was nobody to ordain them

"Do you not perceive, dear sir, that this whole proceeding is founded on an abandonment of the doctrine that a valid Priesthood must be called by revelation? I will not raise a point against them on the score of their corrupt conduct. If they are the Lord's anointed, let me not do them harm Though they commit every crime forbidden in the decalogue, and all the sins which are not named therein, be they in his hands, not mine. He alone has power to make prophets, and he is abundantly powerful to unmake them Be they in his hands, not the hands of man But I cannot forbear to press upon you this point raised by elder Page, that upon your theory, if the body of the church should become corrupt (and more than once the whole church of God on earth has become corrupt and gone to the perdition of the ungodly) a veritable incarnate devil might be elected by the body, 'to be

like unto Moses, yea to be a seer, revelator, translator and a prophet'

'I shall be most happy to hear from you again I wish you to meet the main point by showing how a prophet to stand instead of Joseph should be appointed, and how and by whom he should be ordained And if you show any different rule than that contained in Doc. and Cov, sec. XIV· 1, 2; Sec. I. 2, 3, Sec. LI 1, will you please show when they ceased to be the word of God. A cause is sometimes rested on a single train of reasoning; an argument like the successive links of a chain, which if you sever one, all fall to the ground But ours is based on a large number of cumulative proofs, like collateral bolts, where you have every one to destroy before you can overthrow our position A reiteration of old oft answered objections will not do, but a meeting of the whole question—an answer separately of each of the proofs put forth, and if an old objection is persisted in, it is not sufficient to merely name it, but show by a review of our criticisms that we have not removed it

"JAMES J STRANG"

Gospel Herald, Aug 10, 1848.

John E Page to A. P. Ringer, in 1848,—an extract:

"You say you are 'not connected with any of the present organizations, but as strong in the faith of PRIMITIVE MORMONISM, as any man in *this lower world*' If that is a fact I must say I pity everybody else, and despair of my own salvation Let me tell you candidly, your own words show clearly that you are yet a stranger to the very rudiments of Mormonism, which is found in the following words·

"'I have sent forth the fulness of my gospel by the hand of my servant Joseph Smith, and in weakness have I blessed him, and I have given unto him the Keys of the mystery of those things which have been sealed, even things which were from the foundation of the world, and the things which shall come from this time until the time of my coming, if he abide in me, and if not, *another* will I plant in his stead' Doc and Cov, Sec. XI 4.

"By this we learn that the 'Keys of Mysteries' was to abide in the church with Joseph, or his successors, until the coming of Christ Now if Christ has suffered the church to be left void of those Keys for even one day, it proves *positively* that Joseph was an *imposter* from the beginning of his ministry Now as we both agree in the fact that Joseph was a *true* prophet, of course the Keys of of Mysteries and revelations *is with somebody who is actually and practically taking the lead of the church in this dispensation*, and still you are not decided as to who that person is, and are still strong in the *faith* and *knowledge* of 'primitive MORMONISM' as any man on earth Oh! consistency! hasten the time of thy return * * * *

"You say 'you have been investigating Mr (David) Whitmer's claims' Strange business, indeed What! investigate a man's claims who has not yet said one word for himself, as having any claims to the 'Keys of Myste-

nies and revelations,' as Joseph s successor? It is true that William E McLellan has been beating a reveille to wake up David Whitmer to a remembrance that Joseph ordained him to be his successor, but for some reason or other David won't hear He seems to be more stupid than the little boy Samuel when he was called to be a prophet. * * * * Why? The Lord never told Joseph that he should ordain his successor. In September, 1830, the Lord told Joseph and Oliver, 'I have sent unto you Peter, James and John (angels) to ordain you,' &c In February, 1831, five months after, the Lord said to the church through Joseph relative to Joseph's successor that Joseph should appoint (by revelation) but God would ordain his successor as he (Joseph) was ordained, as the Lord had told him before.' Read Doc. and Cov, sec. L. 3; sec. XIV 1, 2.

"Who on earth then possesses an indisputable 'appointment' and 'ordination' in the form that fills the Letter of the word of God, on this all important point, to a minutia? Ans. JAMES J. STRANG, and *no other man.* Admitting that Joseph did under any impulse or occasion, attempt to ordain Whitmer or *any other man* to be his successor in the prophetic office, he assumed a prerogative that did not belong to him, for the Lord said to him in both alternates, that is, either in his *apostacy* or *martyrdom*, he should 'only appoint' his successor, not ordain him. * * * * Any man that will say he is a believer in the Doc and Cov. as the word of God, and deny James J. Strang as Joseph Smith's successor in the prophetic office, *is ignorant of the word of God relative to that matter, or willfully disobedient.* "JOHN E PAGE"

See Gospel Herald (Vorse, Wis.) of July 13, 1848.

In the same number of that paper we find an epistle of considerable length from William Marks, addressed to all enquiring and faithful Latter Day Saints, who had not yet heard of the claims of James J Strang It would indeed be a pleasure to be able to insert William Marks' whole article but we have room for only a part.

"BELOVED BRETHREN,"—says Mr. Marks, "I have great reason to fear that you have lost sight of one of the greatest principles in the revealed religion of heaven to man, which is this: That God never had a church upon the earth which he acknowledged to be his church, without giving to that church a legal interpreter of the Law and commandments of God, for the salvation of that people, and that the legal interpreter of the law and the commandments of God, given for the salvation of the church, is the prophet, seer, revelator and translator to the church; the First President of the whole church Consequently without a prophet at the head of the church, as a leader and interpreter of the law and commandments of God, there is no salvation, for without a prophet to act in the above capacity there can be no final decision in spiritual matters which might arise in the church; and the consequence would be that the church would soon be divided into

different factions or parties, understanding the law and the commandments differently, and we should have a Babylon among ourselves, and should be no better off than the professed religious world of the present age * * * *

"When the Lord commenced his work in our day to raise up a people unto himself, the first thing he did was to raise up a prophet through whom to reveal his law and commandments to the children of men, even Joseph Smith, and through him the Lord revealed the everlasting gospel And when a sufficient number had received the gospel at the hands of the authorized priesthood which the Lord had established, the church was organized on the 6th of April, 1830, and at that time there was no other court known in the church but the highest court, even the supreme court, over which the prophet himself presided, and after his decision, it being a final decision in any matter, it was had in remembrance no more before the Lord. The court just named was the only court at that time, and the first court established in the church of God in our day, and the only one which was necessary until the church became large, then it became necessary to organize lesser courts, as in the days of Moses, (see Exodus, XIII) to judge the smaller matters And now in regard to this highest court, how is the supreme judge of this highest court in the church appointed? Ans. 'The President of the church, who is also the President of the Council, (or supreme court) is appointed by revelation' Doc. and Cov., Sec. V·6. Well, now suppose a question should arise among the elders abroad, concerning any point of doctrine, how could it be disposed of? Why, it would be carried up before the supreme judge at the highest court in the church, namely, at the seat of the First Presidency, where a final decision would be had by that court, and there would be an end of the matter, and it would be had no more in remembrance before the Lord"

"O yes, you say, I know that was the order while Joseph Smith was living, but Joseph is dead. Well, what of that? Did not the Lord say that if Joseph was taken, he should appoint another in his (Joseph's) stead? See Doc and Cov, Sec XIV 2 We ask what another in Joseph's stead was to be appointed for? The Lord has answered that question in the paragraph just referred to above To teach the revelations and commandments which the Lord had given, and should give through Joseph That is, to give the sense of them, and cause the saints (or people) to understand their meaning in their true light, as well as to receive revelations and commandments for the salvation of the church as Joseph did, and to preside over the whole church, and also over the highest court in the church. Well, say you, if we can find the evidence that the Lord has appointed a prophet in Joseph's stead, then we will receive him. Well, the letter of appointment by or through Joseph can be found in the first number of the Voree Herald, bearing date June 18, 1844, and mailed at the Nauvoo Postoffice, June 19, directed to

James J Strang, of Burlington, Wisconsin Territory In that letter you can find the appointment of President Strang as Joseph's successor in the First Presidency of the whole church, and also an appointment of Voree as a stake of Zion, and a commandment to the saints to gather there, and in the country round about, and also telling them if they scattered the ungodly of the world would swallow them up

"So we see that, as in the days of Moses, we have a supreme court where a final decision can be had, and an end of controversy in all matters of doctrine, in the church Now, brethren, what shall we do under existing circumstances? Shall we run and flee into the wilderness? No, there is no prospect there For Brigham Young told the saints in Nauvoo, the same year in which Joseph Smith was killed, that they need not suppose 'for a moment that his place will be filled by another', thus giving the word of the Lord, by Joseph, the lie See Doc. and Cov, Sec LI 2 Well, he is the man who assumes the authority to preside over the church and to lead them. And where has he led them who have followed him? We will let Jeremiah answer this question, XVII: 5, 6 'Thus saith the Lord, cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord, for he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh, but maketh inhabit the parched places in the wilderness in a salt land and not inhabited.' Their location in the salt valley of the Rocky Mountains, according to their own showing, will require irrigation in order to produce crops, and that being the case it is a parched place. And they say also that it is a salt land, and so did Jeremiah say it should be, and in the wilderness.

"Well, says some one of the saints who is about discouraged, where shall we go for salvation? The Lord has answered that question in a vision and revelation given to his servant, James [at his ordination by the angels of God] on the 27th day of June, 1844. Among many other things told him on that occasion, he says 'Unto thee has the Lord thy God given salvation.' For whom? Ans For as many as will obey the law and commandments of God, given for the salvation of his church in this dispensation.

"Now, brethren, how much better off are the apostate Twelve and their followers than Babylon the Great of this present age? For they (the Brighamites) are without a prophet as well as all the rest of Babylon And here we have it again· No prophet, no salvation, no revelation, no salvation And again, how are the Brighamites to settle any question of doctrine or discipline originating among them? You say you hardly know Well, I will suggest an idea for your consideration Perhaps they will do as other sectarians do under like circumstances. But how is that, you ask? Why, the Catholics consult and abide the decision of the Pope; if I understand it right, and other sects, at least some of them, appeal to Dr Adam Clark, Mr. Scott, John Wesley, Mr

Campbell, and others. But they, none of them, have a thus saith the Lord. And I suppose the Brighamites will abide th decision of their principal men, as they too are without a prophet, and of course without the means of salvation

"I will now suggest another idea, The Lord says by Isaiah, XXIV. 5. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, and broken the everlasting covenant.' What ordinance is it that the Lord says they have changed? I answer, peradventure the ordinance by which a final decision in matters of difference of doctrine might be had by a thus saith the Lord. For in the absence of a prophet that ordinance could not be observed, and consequently the laws would be transgressed, and the everlasting covenant would be broken. for I understand that the Lord by an everlasting covenant has promised to give salvation to the children of men by a prophet, and *without a prophet there is no salvation.*" Thus for William Marks.

Hyrum P. Brown's testimony:

"To all the saints of God in all the World, Greeting — * * * Since the martyrdom of the prophet Joseph, I have been seeking after truth, honesty, and justice as it is in Jesus, and had I not known that there is a divine reality in the gospel of Jesus Christ, as taught by Joseph and Hyrum, I would long since no doubt have been a miserable infidel. * * * At his death, like all the rest of the honest saints, I was earnestly looking for one, Elisha-like, to stand in the footsteps of Joseph, to teach the law of the Lord, and to be like unto Moses, yea to be a seer, a prophet, a revelator and translator But alas! I was disappointed, until *a dayspring from on high revealed the glorious intelligence* that God had not cast off his people In justice to you, my God, and Bro. James J Strang, I must say that early in the fall of 1845, (October) I went to Voree to investigate the claims of brother Strang to the Presidency of the church It was just after he had found the plates. * * * We went into an investigation of his claims in good earnest for *I was not to be imposed upon*, if I could avoid it. I asked him if Joseph sent him that letter He answered, yes. I then asked him, who ordained him? He referred me to Doc. and Cov., Sec. XIV:2; also Sec L: 1, 2, 3, and said he was ordained by an angel This was before he saw Reuben Miller, and before the Voree Herald was *published.*

* * *

"With all candor, brethren, I ask you in the name of honesty, sincerity brotherly kindness, and God's eternal truth, to investigate the claims of Bro. Strang, and mind the injunction of Bro. Paul, prove all things and hold fast that which is good. Investigate philosophically, scientifically and honestly before God, knowing the time has come when men will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they will turn from the truth to fables, not waiting for God to give them their teachers.

Has not this been verified in the Brighamite organization?

"HYRUM P. BROWN"

See Gospel Herald (Voree, Wis) Sept. 21, 1848

John E Page again, upon the theory that young Joseph Smith was appointed to be his father's successor in the prophetic office. The extract below is from his remarks upon "Lyman Wight, and his position."

"Lyman Wight seems to cherish the idea that is ignorantly held out by some others, that Joseph, the prophet's son, will yet come up and take his father's original place in the church as the prophet to the church, whereas there is not one single word in all the book of Doc. and Cov. to warrant the idea.

"It is true that the son is warranted a claim to the priesthood that was conferred on his father by lineal descent, but not the Presidency of the church, that depends entirely on the appointment of his father, [by revelation from God.] And as Joseph's son has made no such claim, it is to be reasonably presumed that he does not recognize any such appointment. If he does, God has been slack concerning his promises, and left his people to wander like sheep without a shepherd in a dark and cloudy night, *subject to the most damnable imposition that ever cursed the earth without an exception in the annals of ecclesiastical history* Can the mind of man once conceive of the idea in the character of the God of heaven, that if Joseph was his prophet to gather such a mighty host into his church as 40,000 in and about Nauvoo, and as many as 200,000 in about 14 years, and this to build up Zion, in the last days, preparatory to the second advent of the Son of God, and *then leave them to be deceived as much as they have been by impostors*, in case Joseph's son is the only true successor to his father in the Prophetic Presidency of the church? O *no!* NO!! NO!!! Again I say NO. God forbid that I for one moment should cherish such an idea of my heavenly Father, and his Son Jesus Christ"

See Gospel Herald, August 31, 1848

It is now and ever will be to the shame of the founders of the Reorganization that they can believe the almighty capable of such gross indifference to his people as to leave them in the hands and entirely under the power and influence of the above named impostors and deceivers for full 16 years, and *then* when imposition, outrage, and usurpation had completely gotten them in their power and mastery, coolly rise up to inform them they were gone wrong and "were rejected," etc This is only one among the many gross follies the Reorganization makes the almighty guilty off It is not easy to see how the almighty in this case has "risen up early," and sent a prophet to warn Israel. But in Mr Strang's appointment he has acted very much like himself.

Whatever else may be said of John E. Page, William Marks and many others who have defended the claims of James J Strang, we can only wish that their fortitude, consistency, and integrity as men had been as strong,

and powerful as their arguments. In their cases we can only say that the spirit of God which is always mighty is one thing, and poor human nature when left to itself is another, and very different thing Without reflecting upon the sad history of John E Page, and his fall from grace, and the successive changes and positions of William Marks, and the sad leaning here at one time, and there at another, of himself and many others, aside from all these human follies and frailties, we present their arguments to the reader, conscious that the works and arguments of all, must either stand or fall upon their own merits, or lack of merit, as the case may be Solomon's fall from grace does not make his proverbs any less wise or valuable Moses' being taken away for sin, and David's sin against Uriah, do not make either the word of the Lord to Moses or the Psalms of David any the less true or excellent. Oliver Cowdery's letters and teachings, and Parley P Pratt's Voice of Warning, are just as true and convincing to-day as they ever were, notwithstanding the fall of their authors from grace and favor with God Just so with the arguments and testimonies of those who have witnessed and testified in behalf of Mr Strang's claims as a prophet of God. If Oliver Cowdery's works, or Pratt's Voice of Warning, can be argued down to-day, in God's name let them go down. Just so with John E Page, William Marks, Hyrum P. Brown, William Smith, George J Adams, Jason W Briggs, Zenos H Gurley, John Shippy, Samuel Graham, and a host of others, who all bore a faithful testimony everywhere for years, that God had appointed James J Strang in accordance with His law, and His word to Joseph Smith, to be prophet in Joseph's stead If their arguments which they then used, and have put on record, can be argued down by sound logic, down let them go A decent respect for their own standing and the opinions of their fellow men, however, ought to have prompted them to a decent refutation of their own arguments, and testimonies, if possible, before running into a position which they knew was totally at war with their former arguments and testimonies. If they were really honest and sincere men, when they first took hold of Mr Strang's claims,—and I suppose they would be offended if we should assert they were anything else—their subsequent departure from their own honest convictions and powerful testimonies leaves and all reasonable men, under a very strong conviction that in departing from their testimonies they either departed from the sober truths of God and high heaven, or else that honest, prayerful, sincere and faithful investigation before God in order to find the truth is exceedingly poorly and meanly rewarded Can any decent man come to any other conclusion? Does God thus give stones and scorpions to those who honestly ask and seek of Him bread and fish?

These men constantly upbraided the followers of Brigham Young as a people who would not reason or think for themselves, but yielded themselves into the hands of the Brighamite leaders as putty or clay in the hands

of their manipulators, to be molded into any form that was pleasing to them But believing their own story, *they* were no such putty or clay, but men who dare to do right, men who in the face of any odds dared to investigate the claims of any man without fear, or the hope of favor from any And now, after those long years of labor and toil, of which the above extracts are but a small example, to build men up in the faith of James J Strang as a prophet of God, and successor to Joseph, they have been, and still are, exceedingly anxious to convince us all that from 1845 to 1856 they were only a lot of sincere madmen and deceivers?

Well, to those who still survive of this class of men, or their followers, we wish to offer a few suggestions, which we sincerely hope they will act upon, before they entertain any hope of drawing us away from the claims of Mr Strang

First of all, you must show that the words in Doc and Cov, "The President of the church who is also the President of the Council (or Supreme Court of the church) is appointed by revelation," has ceased to be the law of God, and when?

Second, as we are told in that law *several times* that the revelation appointing Joseph's successor *must come through Joseph*, and forbids us to receive law or revelation from any other for the government of the church on pain of being deceived, will you please inform us when this has also ceased to be the law of God?

Then, Third, as you have while Strangites, by overwhelming arguments, shown that the Letter of Appointment to Mr Strang is a genuine letter written by Joseph Smith, and mailed at Nauvoo, and duly received in Burlington, Wisconsin, will you now show that those arguments were all false, and that Joseph Smith never wrote that letter, and that there was no thus saith the Lord in that letter appointing Mr Strang to be Joseph Smith's successor?

Fourth, will you show us in what way Mr Caleb P Barnes became a criminal in taking that letter from the postoffice in Burlington for the purpose alleged? And how Mr Strang in sitting down and reading that letter to said Barnes and also in the presence of Aaron Smith, a presiding High Priest on a mission there became a criminal in so doing? Will not the same arguments that show this Letter of Appointment to Mr Strang to be ungenuine also prove that all other letters claiming to be sent by Joseph Smith from Nauvoo to anybody else, for any other purpose, to be ungenuine also? It is positively astounding with what indifference and disregard of the counsels of God and the prophet whom he by the hands of angels ordained and anointed to be his mouth to the people in these last days, both Brighamites and Josephites, set aside this letter of Joseph Smith and the revelation of God Almighty contained in it! Never since the world began has there been a more gross and rebellious departure from God, and his counsels than in the rejection of that letter

The Brighamites, immediately after

the death of Joseph and Hyrum, assume that the *neck* of the dead body is properly the head, and the dead body agreed to this assumption upon the part of the neck. Nearly four years elapse and they discover that this was all wrong and they then go to work and take a few of the neck leaders or ligaments, and distend them a little beyond the neck and vote and proclaim them the head. But what change of positions we find on the part of this Brighamite church!

First, the position was that there were "sealed documents" left in the hands of a few of the Twelve at Nauvoo, which were to be opened when all the Twelve got home and would decide who the person was whom Joseph left to succeed him, which sealed documents were never opened nor *mentioned* afterward.

Second, it was "hush, Brother Miller! Let there be nothing said about this question, or we will have little Joseph killed as his father was." (See Prophetic Controversy, page 4.)

Third, "the Twelve have the power to lead the church."

Fourth, they *elect* a First Presidency *above* the Twelve and lo! lo! these have the power to lead the church!

Fifth, it is taught that all the quorums of the Melchizedec Priesthood from the quorum of the First Presidency down to Seventies are *all* "equal in authority and power, one with the other," and consequently that were all the quorums taken away but the Seventies, the latter quorum could go to work and ordain to the next quorum (the High Priests) above them, then these High Priests could commence and ordain the Twelve, and then the Twelve could ordain the First Presidency over the whole church!

If this is not an example of men making themselves "wise above that which is written," I know not where to find it in all the history of men. We defy all the Brighamites, and all the Josephites on the earth to furnish a single example of thus making a lawful priesthood in all the books of God, from the days of Adam down to the present time.

The law everywhere stares us in the face in all the inspired writings, that no man can confer a degree of authority or priesthood that he does not hold himself, and that whatsoever is more or less than this, cometh of evil. In the church of God it has ever been understood that its officers consist of various quorums, each one of which is a step or degree in authority above the other, from the quorum of the deacons to the quorum of the First Presidency; and that no one or more in any one of these quorums can ordain another to a quorum above them. This being an eternal rule in God's Kingdom, it follows as an absolute necessity that, as often as the Chief Shepherd of God's flock or church is taken or cut off—he being the highest in authority and power and gifts in that church—some heavenly messenger must replace that officer by anointing and ordination under his hands, otherwise the body is dead. But if it be a fact that all the quorums of the Melchizedec Priesthood from the Seven

the death of Joseph and Hyrum, assume that the *neck* of the dead body is properly the head, and the dead body agreed to this assumption upon the part of the neck. Nearly four years elapse and they discover that this was all wrong and they then go to work and take a few of the neck leaders or ligaments, and distend them a little beyond the neck and vote and proclaim them the head But what change of positions we find on the part of this Brighamite church!

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ties upward are all equal with the First Presidency of the church in authority, power, and gifts, and therefore angelic ordinations are not needed as long as even a Seventy is on earth, just as Brighamites teach, we may very reasonably ask the following questions.

First. As Moses was ordained under the hands of Jethro to a higher degree of the Melchizedec Priesthood, what was the necessity of Moses being *again* ordained under the hands of angels to be a prophet, seer, revelator and deliverer to Israel? For the New Testament tells us in two places that he was so ordained. (Acts 7: 35 Gal 3 19 Inspired Translation)

Second. Why did not Moses leave the ordination of Joshua to the Seventies, High Priests, or The Twelve in his day, when he was about to be taken from earth? For these offices were in the church in Moses' day, as well as in Christ's day, and in our own day (Num 11: 16, 17 12 5 to 8. 13: 1 to 15 Josh 24 31)

Third. Why did not Zecharias, the father of John, who was a *High* Priest in the temple of God, ordain Jesus a prophet like unto Moses? (Luke 4: 17 to 21 Acts 5 31)

Fourth Why did not Jesus leave the appointment and ordination of Peter to the prophetic office, to the rest of the twelve instead of saying to him, "*I will give* unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of heaven?" For remember, this was said to Peter long after Peter was ordained to be one of the Twelve Apostles (See Doc. and Cov., Rev. given April, 1829 Matt. 16. 19)

Fifth Is it any where said in the standard works of the church, that the Twelve Apostles are prophets, seers, revelators and translators to the church? *Not once.*

Sixth. Is it anywhere said in these works that The Twelve have the Keys of Mysteries and revelations? *Never*

Seventh Is it anywhere said in those works that any man who belongs to any one of the Quorums of the priesthood can, *under any circumstances*, ordain a man to a Quorum above him? Not in one instance We know very well that in their (judicial) "decisions," or in the settlement of difficulties arising among brethren anywhere in all the world, the Quorum of the Seventies, the Twelve, and the three High Priests of the High Priests' Quorum,—all these Quorums, or a majority of them, are said to be equal one with the other But all know that the "decisions" of these Quorums and the *Priesthood* of these Quorums, is another and very different thing.

The language of Mr. Strang that "whatever amount of authority, or whatever law, rule, or power it takes to place the predecessor in office, the same authority, rule, law or power it takes to place or make his successor in office," is a grand and universal truth. It is true in every nation, kindred, tongue, tribe, or people, under the whole heavens, always has been and it ever will be, as long as any inhabitants live upon the earth The same is true in God's eternal King-

dom wherever it has been known to exist. If there is any truth that Latter Day Saints ought to have learned long ere this, it is that no man or set of men on earth can either make or unmake a prophet of God, that as the angels of God, acting under the immediate instruction of the Almighty, have made Joseph Smith a prophet of the Most High, by the ordination and imposition of their hands, they alone can make and constitute his successor, or one to act in his stead. They certainly ought to know that when Joseph Smith or any prophet like unto him, is taken away that he leaves none behind him equal in power, authority, and gifts; and that being the case, absolute necessity demands that the power that made him, must also make his successors. No power less than the angels can do it. According to this universal law, therefore, if we can only find out how one prophet like unto Moses has been constituted and made, we have the Key to the mode or pattern as to how they were all constituted and made Joseph Smith, it is expressly declared, was a prophet like unto Moses Moses, himself was ordained by angels, as before referred to (Acts 7. 35 Gal 3 19 Inspired Translation) Here are two cases When the prophetic office was conferred on Peter, it was conferred by the Saviour of mankind who is placed above all angels Here are three cases of the ordination and anointing of prophets like unto Moses under the hands of heavenly messengers. Of Jesus himself it is expressly said that he was anointed to the prophetic office under the hands of God himself. (See Luke 4: 16 to 21 Acts 5: 31; 10. 38, 42 Heb. 1: 8, 9 It is well known by all bible students that the word Christ signifies the Anointed See also Dan. 9: 24.) Now we are informed, in many places in all the standard books of the church in these latter days, that the office of Prophet, Seer, Revelator, and Translator to the church of God as held by Joseph Smith, Peter, James and John, Jesus Christ and Moses is the same office exactly as that held by Melchizedec in his day. It follows therefore, that as no mortal man or set of men can confer this office, that Melchizedec must of necessity have been also ordained by some one of the heavenly host. And now does it need any additional evidence to prove that prophets like unto Moses are consecrated, ordained, and anointed under the hands of angels? With so many cases of this kind before us, can we regard those who oppose the claims of James J Strang as anything short of absolute and open rebellion against God almighty? Mormons especially, who are supposed as saints, to know more of the order of heaven, and the holy priesthood than sectarians, for *them* to be found fighting these things, how can we help regarding them as rebels and opposers of God's law, and the order of his house? If they can defend themselves from these charges, so let them We have no idea that the arguments presented here is going to convert under the present circumstances, any great number of either the leaders or the led in either

the ranks of Brigham Young or the young Josephites Yet we cannot but think that they will lay these things soberly to heart in days to come, when placed side by side with the many other things written which they have rejected. For we cannot but think that the day is near at hand, when the refuge of both Brighamite and Josephite lies will be swept away, and the eyes of many of the honest-hearted among them will be opened.

For many years they all have classed Mr Strang with Brewster, Bancroy, Gladden Bishop, and various other paper kite upstarts and apostates, and with an air of triumph have asked us "where is your prophet *now*"? "Who is your prophet *now*?" "Who did Strang leave to succeed *him*," etc etc? Just as though our failure to answer any of these questions was proof positive that they had been led by a true prophet since the day of Joseph Smith's death and that James J. Strang was a block impostor, and the letter of appointment written by the almighty and his prophet, a whole-cloth fraud and lie We have, however, this much of an advantage of either these two bodies of Mormons that is, that we have been led for *twelve years* by a prophet like unto Moses, whereas they have had only man-made prophets from the death of the prophet Joseph up till this year, 1887 If I am in the dark, I ask to be enlightened If Brigham Young, John Taylor, or Young Joseph has brought forth any of the lost glories of the past, any mystery of God's Kingdom, any revelation that enlightens us upon the dark things of holy writ, let them name them.

"I have given unto Joseph the Keys of the mystery of those things which are sealed *until* I shall appoint unto them another in his stead."

If either Brigham, Taylor, or Joseph III was appointed to succeed Joseph, does not this language imply that whoever was appointed should enter upon the bringing forth of those sealed mysteries? If Mr Strang has not entered upon this work, and brought forth much of those sealed records of the Nephites, who *has* done it? And as neither Taylor, Young nor Joseph III has brought forth an iota of these things, in the past forty years, what evidence is there that they, or any one of them, will ever bring them forth? Absolutely none. Is not this great fact a most withering count against them? The possession of the Urim and Thummim constitutes a Seer Did any one of these men ever handle or see the Urim and Thummim? Did any one of them ever walk and talk with God face to face as all prophets like unto Moses since the world began have done? From all that is written in relation to true prophets, or prophets of God like unto Moses, it is safe enough to set down the following as the unmistakable characteristics by which they may be known

First. A man whom God designs to fill such an office, he (God) will call him to it by his own voice from the heavens Second. God will send his angels to ordain and anoint him to that office. Third In virtue of

such anointing and ordination, such a man will have the privilege of speaking with God face to face. Fourth. he will be a lawgiver to God's people so far as God will give them law. Fifth He will possess the Urim and Thummim, and will be the only lawful revelator to God's people. Sixth He will have the ministry of angels, and will have power to accomplish anything that is really necessary to the safety and welfare of God's people, whether it be in revealing the mysteries of the present, the past, or the future, whether it be in dividing of the sea, turning rivers out of their courses, or removing mountains; whether it be in smiting the earth with famine, pestilence, or the destruction of armies —indeed there is scarcely any bounds can be set to the works of such prophets. But, of course, all these things depend largely upon the wants, obedience, desires, faithfulness, and worthiness of the people. It always was so, it always will be.

To conclude, as we have been informed, that both Josephites and Brighamites are making some converts among the inexperienced Strangites, it was thought advisable to put these things side by side with the "Diamond" and "Prophetic Controversy", especially as they are designed to meet what appears to be a new feature in Brighamism, namely, that "the Twelve, the three Presidents of the High Priests' quorum, and the Seventies were all equal in authority and power with the First Presidency over the whole church." A grosser perversion of God's law was never thought of, unless indeed that it was in the setting up of the Re-organization by "two High Priests, and one Senior President of the Seventies," which two High Priests and one Senior President of the Seventies we are left to conjecture were Jason W. Briggs, Zenos H Gurley and a somebody also, who we conjecture was Hyrum P. Brown, all three of whom were some little time before officers in the church under James J Strang, received their priesthood in that church, separated themselves from it, and had their priesthood taken from them. And with *such* a *priesthood*, in connection with William Marks, another apostate from the Strangite body, they undertook to ordain Young Joseph as a *Prophet of God like unto Moses*, to occupy the place of his father! If there is anything bolder than that in the shape of a claim to priesthood on record, against any people, it has never yet come to light. We have several times been treated to "the history of the Reorganization, by Zenos H. Gurley," in the *Saints Herald*, but they have never yet given us squarely the names of those "two High Priests, and that one Senior President of the Seventies." We imagine that it would not do Somebody might raise the question of genuineness

Though neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet myself, in answer to the question, "who is your prophet *now*?" etc., at the risk of my own salvation, I will put the following prophecy on record· That the prophetic office as held by Joseph Smith and James J. Strang has never yet

been vacated one moment either by the death of Joseph Smith or James J Strang. I know not where that prophet is, or where he will come from, but I am as well satisfied that there is *now on earth* a living prophet, seer, revelator and translator such as Joseph Smith and James J Strang was, as I am satisfied of any other great fact or truth in the whole science or system of Mormonism.

If the question be asked, Why does he not then make his appearance among the Latter Day Saints? I cannot say just why exactly, but my honest conviction is simply this: That when they feel a great deal less interested in prophets of their own make, and a great deal more in prophets of God's make, he will be very apt to show himself among them, and not till then. I am strongly of the opinion that if God should send a Moses to the people of Utah under the present circumstances they would reject him. The motto there being that, whatever God sends to them "must come through the proper channel," &c. That means that as long as John Taylor is at the head of that people, there is no need of any prophet being sent from God. And the Josephites are not one whit better. Indeed, they have somehow got it that young Joseph is the "one mighty and strong" who is to lead the Latter Day Saints out of bondage. A greater or more gross piece of folly and fraud was never palmed upon man. The day is near when the shame they have all heaped upon the Strangites shall rebound upon both these Brighamites and Josephites four fold.

I cannot, however, but feel to sympathize with the Utah Mormons in their persecutions, and have said and written many things in their defence, simply because I feel that they are persecuted for their faith in a right-sone and divine principle; but I have no faith in either Brigham Young or John Taylor's claims as legally appointed prophets of God, and never can. Neither can I look upon Utah as a lawfully appointed gathering place for the saints. It was not appointed by revelation through any true or lawfully constituted prophet, and was therefore not authorized of God. The prophecy of Joseph that they "would be *driven* to the Rocky Mountains," &c., is a very different thing to a direct revelation through him, appointing that land as a place of gathering. Their temple building also, and their baptisms for the dead therein I fully believe will be reckoned as naught in the eyes of the Almighty in days to come. It is decreed in these days that the gospel shall roll forth until it fills the whole earth, but does that argue that men in high places in the church of God would not usurp dominion, and thereby for a time shut out the light of heaven from the honest in heart? If God has decreed in these days that he will raise up one mighty and strong like unto Moses to lead the Saints *out of bondage as their fathers were led* AT THE FIRST, does this

imply that no one has usurped dominion, misled the saints, and brought them into bondage?

What would be the wisdom of raising up one like unto Moses, to lead the saints out of bondage if there is now just such a prophet as Moses was, already among them? If John Taylor is just such a prophet, what is the need of looking to God for him to raise up one? and if he is not such a prophet, what business has he to claim to be the leader of God's people? Now that their enemies are about to take the last vestige of human rights away from them, and deliver them into the hands of their most inhuman oppressors "serpents, cockatrices that cannot be charmed" —to be robbed, plundered, trampled upon, and enslaved with impunity, will not John Taylor arise in the Majesty of God, and at least, Joshua like, point out a remedy? And if he does not show himself a prophet of God, now in their distress, what evidence can he offer that he ever was a prophet, either as Joseph, or as Moses? And as Joseph was to appoint one who was to be like unto Moses, does it not follow that if he is not such a prophet, that Brigham Young was not and that both have rejected him whom God *has* appointed, and that God has therefore left them to themselves, with the rest of their usurping brethren to prove their own nothingness, in the sight of all people? Why can not John Taylor now, as Jeremiah and all other true prophets in the past, point out or tell the people of Utah what the wrong is on the part of the people there, and give them at least a chance to right it? Have the people there absolutely rebelled against his counsel, that the enemy has got, and is getting such power over them? Is Zion (the pure in heart) to be moved out of her place? God says she shall not, and he says also that she shall not be brought into bondage Is it not always well with God's people, when they are willing to do as their prophets command them? And have the Utah Mormons refused to do so?

Now, it will be asked by some, "what have you Strangites to offer us *now*, provided we should lose faith in John Taylor, as a true Prophet?" We answer, nothing only what God has given us by both Joseph and James If the Letter of Appointment and the ordination of James, and the revelations and law that he has brought forth from the records that have been sealed, by Urim and Thummim, and by the ministry of angels, are not worth having, then, my friends, you need not have them! If it is just as well to continue to be led by a false prophet, as to learn the things of God through a true one, and find out thereby that you have been misled and deceived for forty years, is for each to decide for himself One thing more. As God has promised us one like unto Moses to lead us out of bondage, as our fathers were led out of the Egyptian bondage, the prayers of all should go up to God, that he may fulfil his promise in this thing. We are in bondage and going faster and faster into it, and the day is hastening when there

will be no safety in Utah, and surely nowhere else, for Latter Day Saints, unless the Lord comes forth "out of his hiding place" in their behalf, or, in other words, sends one like unto Moses, ordained by angels, from his hiding place, as he sent Moses from his hiding place

You are not asked to cease in any wise from well-doing; nor from any duty, either in the house or in the warning of sinners from the error of their ways. The appointment of Voree as a refuge of the oppressed, will have some significance by and by The people will find that God was not trifling with his people when he appointed that place as a refuge to them out of Nauvoo, through the prophet Joseph, and that he will not be mocked in anything that he has said to James Amen

Boyne, Charlevoix Co Mich , }
February 188, }

POSTSCRIPT

The following two paragraphs are taken from a work by Dr Frank lin D Richards, entitled "A Compendium of the Doctrines of the Gospel," and claims to be the teachings of Joseph Smith the Saer

"Different Degrees of the Melchizedec, Priesthood — Answer to the question, 'Was the Priesthood of Melchizedec taken away when Moses died?' All Priesthood is Melchizedec. but there are *different portions* or *degrees of it* *That portion* which brought Moses to speak face to face with God was taken away, but that which brought the ministry of angels remained All the prophets had the Melchizedec Priesthood, and were ordained by God himself"

The reader will do very well to scan the above carefully and compare with Mr Strang's teachings on the prophetic office, contrasting these things with the Brighamite teachings, that "All the officers and quorums of the Melchizedec Priesthood are equal in power and authority with the first Presidency, and that any one of them can be prophet, seer, revelator, and translator, if he is only chosen by the voice of the church, to lead it" Shame on such teachings!

Another extract from the Compendium "All things whatsoever God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit and proper to reveal to us while we are dwelling in mortality, in regard to our mortal bodies, are revealed to us * * * independent of * * * this mortal tabernacle * * * but are revealed to our spirits precisely as though we had no bodies at all, and those revelations which will save our spirits will save our bodies. God reveals them to us in view of no eternal dissolution of the body, or tabernacle. Hence the awful responsibility, that rests upon us, in relation to our dead, for all the spirits who have not obeyed the gospel in the flesh, must obey it in the spirit, or be damned" (See pages 287 and 284 of Compendium) God told Abraham that even should he die he was able to fulfill all his words to him John the Baptist's ministry was not more than entered upon as a preparer of the way of the Messiah when Herod beheaded him And certainly the work of Jesus was but merely begun

when he was crucified. The Brighamites have from the start said that Joseph Smith since his death had entered more largely upon his ministry than while in the flesh; yet some of them think they see some things wherein the word of the Lord to Mr. Strang "has failed" We would admonish them not to be too hasty in their judgment. That was the very ground upon which the Jews of Christ's time fell, and were driven to darkness. Being disobedient to the counsels of God through John they were quite satisfied that the word of God through the prophets was not fulfilled in Jesus, and their darkness remains to this day Just so with all who have rejected the word of God through Joseph appointing James to the prophetic office and Voree as a refuge for the oppressed They have been driven on and on into darkness and unless they repent while they have opportunity, their fate will be similar to that of the Jews.

The reader is here informed that the Doctrine and Covenants followed here by John E Page, James J. Strang, and William Marks, is the old Nauvoo edition W. W.

March, 1887.